DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 482 250 IR 058 899

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TITLE	Components of a Quality School Library Program: What Do They Look Like? How Do We Assess Where We Are?
PUB DATE	2003-06-00
NOTE	8p.; Versions of this paper presented at the Annual Meetings of the: International Conference of Crimea (10th, Sudak, Crimea, Ukraine, June 7-15, 2003); Graduate Teachers' Seminar, University of Asmara (Asmara, Eritrea, June 26, 2003); International Association of School Librarianship Conference (Durban, South Africa, July 8, 2003); Ministry of Basic Education, Sports & Culture, National Library, School Library Services Seminar (Namibia, July 22, 2003); Botswana University, Department of Library Science Seminar (Botswana, July 25, 2003).
PUB TYPE	Reports - Evaluative (142) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS
DESCRIPTORS	Elementary Secondary Education; Global Approach; Information Literacy; Learning Resources Centers; *Library Role; *Library Services; Models; *School Libraries

ABSTRACT

This presentation addresses the issues of change in perception of the role and program of modern school library and information services (SLIS). A brief review of the various aspects of school librarianship over the past decade is addressed from the global perspective. The purpose and function of the modern SLIS is examined. The role of the student, teacher, and teacher-librarian are central to the discussion for each of these dynamics of a program. A model is shared that provides opportunity to examine each of the components, including information literacy, independent learning skills, resource based learning, cooperative (or collaborative) planning and teaching, literacy/literary and cultural appreciation skill, information and reference services, materials production and editing skills, media and electronic technology skills, inter-agency collaboration, advocacy-leadership-communication skills, organization and administrative functions, professional growth and development, assessment and evaluation processes, and educational research activities. Samples of the kinds of activities that fall into each component are discussed. Methods of assessing the success of the SLIS program as an integral part of the school are considered for each component. (Author/MES)

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Components of a Quality School Library Program:

What do they look like ?

How do we assess where we are ?

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Versions of this presentation were made at

1. **Tenth International Conference << Crimea 2003 >> Republic of Crimea, Ukraine 09 June 2003**
2. **Eritrea. University of Asmara. Graduate Teachers' Seminar 26 June 2003**
3. **International Association of School Librarianship Conference. Durban, South Africa, 08 July 2003**
4. **Namibia. Ministry of Basic Education, Sports & /Culture. National Library. School Library Services. Seminar. 22 July 2003**
5. **Botswana. University. Department of Library Science. Seminar. 25 July 2003**

Abstract:

This presentation will address the issues of change in perception of the role and program of modern school library and information services (SLIS). A brief review of the various aspects of school librarianship over the past decade will be addressed from the global perspective. The purpose and function of the modern SLIS will be examined. The role of the student, teacher, and teacher-librarian will be central to the discussion for each of these dynamics of a program. A model will be shared that will provide opportunity to examine each of the components. Samples of the kinds of activities that fall into each component will be discussed. Methods of assessing the success of the SLIS program as an integral part of the school will be considered for each component. Sample material will be shared where appropriate; discussion will be encouraged.

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School Library & Information Services
Programme Components

The Modern School Library: Components of a Quality School Library & Information Services Program

"What a school believes about education will be demonstrated in the way it uses its library."
Former US Office of Education Director

"Don't tell me what you believe, show me what you do, and I will tell you where your priorities are."

Background views

School librarianship is an evolving profession. For many years, school libraries have been considered to be the repository of the 'materials' of the school, the learning resources, the teaching tools. School library personnel have perfected various schemes for organizing, cataloging, controlling, and scheduling the space and collection. These centres have functioned in ranges from warehouses to spacious study halls or somewhat comfortable lounges. Depending on the personality and training of the library staff, the activities have ranged from clerical functions to providing assistance with locating resources.

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Administrators have looked at the school library and asked "What is the program that is offered here ?" Quickly, the library staff have evolved a collection of independent lessons on materials organization, bibliographic control, reading programs, and activities to promote the materials or the services. In the early stages, there was little done to determine where the library really fitted into the educational process. It was a support service, an adjunct, a repository. If the staff were friendly, it became a welcoming place for students who had natural inclinations to reading and the love of literature. In previous generations, the focus has been on the instructor, the collection, the facilities or even the "heart of the school".

In more recent times, educators had realized that the **integration** of the **SCHOOL LIBRARY & INFORMATION SERVICES (SLIS) program** into the total educational program could lead to many advantages. If one reviews the literature, it soon becomes apparent, that an alternative model of service would be advantageous. Over the last decade, the shift has become more and more apparent.

Enunciating a program of services for the school library which would lift it from the clerical functions, warehousing functions, reading functions to an **integral part** of the total school program requires some radical changes in thinking, and some daring experiments. The various components have evolved gradually. Fundamentally it is quite simple: ***The school library is the place; the school library program is what happens in that place to make it relevant to the total educational program of the school.***

PARADIGM SHIFT

The most important change in school librarianship has been one of **perspective.** The centre of the school's educational program is **the pupil**, the needs of the pupil and a learner, and the skills needed for the learner to be successful in life-long learning. Hence a shift to a student-learner-centred SLIS program is the goal.

LEADERSHIP

This paradigm shift will be very traumatic for traditional librarians. It will be new for many teachers. Administrators can be lead to appreciate the benefits of such a shift. Leadership in helping staff understand this new perspective on school librarianship is vital. It is not enough to say "**What does the school library teach?"** but rather "**How is the school library an integral part of the school's educational program** ?"

THE SLIS PROGRAM COMPONENTS

The components that **integrate** the SLIS with the classroom teaching program are what differentiates modern SLIS schools from traditional libraries. These components demonstrate that a SLIS program is more than a set of teaching skills. The **processes** of learning in the program permeate all activities in the school.

5.1 Information Literacy is the ability to recognize the need for information to solve problems and develop ideas; pose important questions; use a variety of information gathering strategies; locate relevant and appropriate information; assess and evaluate information for quality, accuracy, authority and authenticity; demonstrate that the knowledge has made a different in one's personal attitudes and behaviour

Information Literacy includes the abilities to use the practical and conceptual tools of information technology (print, non-print, and electronic), to understand, form, format, location and access methods, how information is situated and produced, research processes, and to format and publish textual and multi-media formats, and to adapt to emerging technologies.

Check the ***ATLC Student's Information Literacy Needs in the 21 st Century: Competencies for Teacher-Librarians at***

http://www.atlc.ca/Publications/competen.htm

or ACRL's Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education

http://www.ala.org/acrl/ilcomstan.html

5.2 Independent Learning Skills are the skills of problem solving, higher order thinking, critical thinking, and information access that makes it possible for an individual to become an independent life-long learner. They cover the whole range of traditional library skills, coupled with all the kinds of skills that make accessing digital and visual data viable, and help student's develop their own personal response to the information. These skills are usually developmental and cyclical in nature. They may be introduced at one level, re-taught at another, and re-enforced at a later level of sophistication as the student progresses through the educational system. It behooves the teacher-librarian to work closely with teachers and Dept. Heads to compile ILS scope and sequence lists appropriate to individual classes and to each curriculum. An outstanding tool to do this can be found in work done by Ryan and Capri. Check the website for http://www.capraryan.com.au

How is the ILS Component Evaluated ?

1. Are assignments given that require use of library and information resources in the school ?
2. What percentage of the students use the school library to undertake their projects ?
3. What proportion of the students use the public library or other libraries to complete their projects ?
4. How many planned units have been implemented this school year?
5. Are there sections of the assignment that focus on ILS development ?
6. Is the ILS Scope and Sequence used in lesson planning ?
7. Are lessons organized to introduce a skill, review a skill, or re-enforce a skill as appropriate to the age and ability of the students and the topic ?
8. Are the ILS evaluated as the project progresses, and when it is completed ?
9. Were additional lessons prepared to meet evolving student needs for ILS ?
10. Were students invited to give feedback on which skills and activities worked for them ?
11. Is there a common Style Handbook for the school ?

5.3 Resource Based Learning adds value to the collection in the direct support of the curriculum. The concept that learning is based on a problem-solving approach that is planned and development, and requires that students develop appropriate information learning skills to enable them to locate, analyze, comprehend, and synthesize the information they need from a collection of specifically selected resources appropriate to the topic under consideration. The teacher-librarian is in a central position to help classroom teachers develop the knowledge and skills required to implement child-centred resource-based investigation and learning. For an example of this model, check

http://www.stf.sk.ca/prof_growth/ssc/ssla/rthr.htm

Some Suggested Strategies for Implementation

1. Both working partners have a clear understanding of the place of the SLIS resources in the project
2. Bibliographies, web-liographies, and other relevant lists are available on file from previous work on this topic, or with similar grades, or from sharing with other schools
3. Cataloguing of school and system resources are speedy and efficient, using automated tools that can be accessed easily.
4. Links to external sources are established by phone, electronically or in person to identify resources that might be available, time slots needed, and other related access concerns
5. Reserve collections are established as needed
6. Intranet websites are developed to access the desired materials for specific skill development
7. Expertise, equipment and supplies are available (or can be located and scheduled) to help teachers or students develop locally produced materials.

5.4 Cooperative (or Collaborative) Planning and Teaching is the building of relationships within the school community. It is an instructional model in which the teacher and teacher-librarian become collaborative partners in the instructional process, in the use of resources, and in the evaluation of the teaching

and learning outcomes. Teacher-librarians generate opportunities to work with colleagues to implement the goals of the curriculum. Some of the teaching will be done independently by the teacher or teacher-librarian. Some will be done in a team in either the library or the classroom. The main focus will be the **planning** so that each team member understands his/her role as an educator and mentor for the students.

What does CCPT look like ?

1. There is evidence of a thoughtful and planned approach to the learning activities that occur in the library based on a philosophy of child-centred learning and information literate students..
2. There is evidence of quality teaching at all times in the library.
3. A varied repertoire of teaching skills are modeled with students
4. The teacher-librarian has credibility with teachers on staff.
5. The teachers come to the teacher-librarian for ideas on how to implement their ideas
6. The teacher-librarian is well acquainted with the content of all the curriculum (and the revisions) that span the grades being served by the library
7. The library staff is aware of the ILS Scope and Sequence, and takes leadership in encouraging teachers to adapt and adopt it as a regular part of their teaching.
8. The teacher-librarian has kept pace with technology changes in the school and is able to model use of the tools, and to help other teachers learn how to use them.
9. A collection appropriate to the curriculum needs has been developed.
10. The teacher-librarian is aware of the content of the resources on the shelves.
11. Website resources are selected and evaluated to meet the needs of teachers and students.
12. The teacher-librarian works in a close collaborative mode with teachers to design projects, units, and activities that will develop strong independent learners.
13. Teaching is shared as appropriate to the objectives and goals of the project or unit.
14. Time and space in the library are arranged on a flexible basis to meet the needs of the project.
15. The teacher-librarian is invited to participate in the evaluation of the student's progress in the unit.
16. Feedback is sought from the students on what parts of the unit worked well for them, and why.
17. Teachers are encouraged to evaluate their unit, and to make recommendations for revision before the document is filled for future reference.
18. Successful units are shared with other staff, and other schools.
19. Teams are invited to share the process that made their work successful with others in professional development sessions.
20.

5.5 Literacy / Literary and Cultural Appreciation Skill (LCA) extends and applies learning how to read and write. Literacy is a personal act of making one's own meaning from all aspects of communication, literature and the arts..

LCA begins with **reading guidance** and other promotion activities. This aspect includes storytelling, booktalks, discussion, and exhibits.

At a second level, lessons and activities are designed to incorporate **appreciation skills** such as: Authorship, Illustration, Production; Techniques of Form, and Levels of Interpretation. The component relates well to Language Arts and Social Studies classes.

Skills in the **creative response** to all media include oral responses, visual responses (including authorship), and multi-disciplinary creations.

LCA skills are cyclical in nature, and return a different levels of sophistication across the grades. Skills in the creative response to all media, and an immersion in literature makes it possible for the individual to develop one's own communication style, and a personal perspective on the broader dynamics of life. The skills of appreciation in literature have parallel skills in relation to the various other fine art forms, and can be learned in similar patterns.

5.6 Information and Reference Services provide the **access** to information from the broadest range of sources. It includes print tools, Internet, databases, CD ROM technology, and visual media. This service aims to

help students **learn how to access resources** both in the school and through external agencies to meet their specific problem-solving needs.

5.7 Materials Production and Editing Skills address the issue of helping students learn how to represent their knowledge and to communicate the changes in their attitudes and behaviour to others. This is the stage that helps students move their learning from compilation skills to comprehension and interpretation levels. Their **presentation skills** can be widely enhances through the use of various media.

5.8 Media and Electronic Technology Skills have opened up a whole new range of options for learners. Technology is a tool that can facilitate learning. It must be viewed as an adjunct to other resources in the school, and as such, supports and enhances curriculum and instruction. Multi-media, computational, and communicative technologies enable teachers to accommodate **individual learning styles** and **rates of learning** thereby creating greater **equity of opportunities** for all learners. It is the responsibility of all educators to teach appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes by **using technology effectively** in their teaching-learning process, and by teaching students how to use it wisely in their everyday lives. To be able to access information from a variety of sources is only one step. To be able to relate acquired information to personal problems and situations is another phase. To learn skills to **demonstrate relevance** of the information to their world, makes for **creative and critical learners**.

5.9 Inter-Agency Collaboration shows the ability of the school to **involve other agencies** in the education process, whether it be access to resources, work experience projects, human interactions, and shared use of facilities. As the school reaches out to other agencies, the community becomes more supportive of the changes and new directions in modern education.

5.10 Advocacy – Leadership – Communication Skills

With the shift in direction for modern SLIS, there is a need for a whole new range of skills for the library staff. It is now possible to **advocate** for change in the educational programs in the schools. As the library staff **interacts** with the teachers in an educational mode, then new **leadership roles** evolve. The ability to **communicate meaningful** with the teaching staff will provide great dividends for the students and for the SLIS program in the school.

5.11 Organization & Administrative Functions are performed to cause the above components to come together in a meaningful fashion. The walls of the library have moved. The library must be changed to a **child-centred, learning-centred facility**, with close communication with both teachers and students. The potential is phenomenal. This component involves new decisions regarding: **Differentiated staffing and staff management, Budgets and financial management, Facilities arrangement and management, Operational functions.** These components have always been part of traditional libraries. Now the focus of the SLIS is "re-directed" from resource management to the " **child and to student learning needs".**

5.12 Professional Growth and Development is what is needed to make this paradigm shift work. One simple exposure will not be enough for most people to shift their perspective.

With training sessions led at the district-level by a **process oriented leader**, the school building level staffs will begin to take small steps to incorporate many of these program components into their range of vision.

Parallel to the sessions for the SLIS staff, it is important that an active campaign be undertaken to nurture e **administrative understanding** of the new directions. This can best be done through one-on-one interactions.

Modeling is the best way to help teachers see how the shift will be beneficial to them. If they do not see a benefit, they will not change. **Enlisting** the assistance of the Methodological and Pedagogical Consultants in the system will make this work move much more easily and quickly. It takes time and patience to cause these changes in thinking to take root, and to nurture their growth and maturity.

5.13 Assessment & Evaluation Processes must be on-going. These processes are linked to **goal statements** for the SLIS program established at the beginning of each school year. It is important that the school library personnel have a part in designing the **evaluation instruments**. The results from annual reports, progress

reports, visitations, and other informal assessments should all be taken into consideration for planning future professional development opportunities; refining the next year's goals ; and developing proposals for budgets, projects, and other initiatives

A variety of **rubrics** must be developed in collaboration with the teachers and students to show the different levels of expectation for marks. These rubrics can relate to both the different levels of skill development, as well as the matching acquisition of knowledge.

5.14 Educational Research Activities take on new opportunities as teachers and administrators begin to see alternative ways of approaching the education process. Close collaboration with colleges of education and universities will make it possible to conduct **action-based research projects** in the school. From time to time additional funds may be located to assist in such research activities.

CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTIONAL INTEGRATION

Where do I get the time to do these things ? I'm going flat out as it is now !

Each time there is a paradigm shift in education, they are many stresses at all levels in the institution. Re-examine your current activities to see where they fit into the new model. Some activities need a change in focus. Some need to be re-thought completely, maybe even discarded (painful as that may be.) Some new endeavors need to be started.

To change takes courage. Are you willing to take the **risk** to put your program into such a focus that it will help children become life-long learners? Now is the time. Move into the mainstream of education.

Role for the Teacher-librarian

As education shifts to a more child-centred approach, the concept of developing **information literacy** in all students takes priority. This is the place were team-teaching and collaborative planning become effective approaches. IL is based on the premise that students must become information literate to be able to survive when 'drowning (or simply floating) in the sea of information."

The teacher-librarian cannot make this shift alone. It depends on his/her ability to **interact** with other teachers. Winning them as **collaborative partners** is key. When one combines Independent Learning Skills **(ILS)** with Resource-Based Learning **(RBL)** in a Cooperative Planning **(CPT)** model, there are powerful forces at work to meet the goals of any curriculum and any examination structure. As two teachers (classroom and library) join forces to work with individuals, small groups, and whole classes, there is great potential to develop **critical thinkers and creative learners.** As these components are studied and understood by the SLIS staff, they will attempt projects with **approachable teachers.** As the teachers become more comfortable with their new teaching team members, they will be willing to expand the options in new planning modes. The wise teacher librarian will record the information on a **planning form (template)** for sharing and future reference. Each successful project, unit or activity will add to the unit or projects data bank.

Each district really does need to adopt its own "**problem solving model",** or adapt one from another jurisdiction. It is imperative that there be a **common model** used in the system, so that as students move from one level to another, they have a common pattern of addressing problem solving situations. Collaboration with college and university counterparts can be very helpful in this process.

The best **SLIS Handbooks** have sections which: define the program component, describe what it "looks like" in action, and offer 'suggested strategies for implementation'. The degree to which these factors are addressed will be the best indicator of how the success of the program can be assessed.

SUMMARY.

The components of the modern school library program have been outlined in detail. They need to be displayed so that the stakeholders can see the implications of implementation an SLIS program in direct relation to their classroom and parenting roles.

Similar sessions need to be devoted to addressing in depth the major new components.

The broad picture has been sketched. Determine where you are in it, and ask for the kinds of professional growth you need to implement the changes. This can be exciting new ground for SLIS in your school, your district, or your region. Take the opportunity to be a leader and an innovator.

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